



BONHOMME RICHARD'S ALMANAC

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"I have not yet begun to fight!"



18-YEAR-OLD DRIVES 'REVOLUTIONARY GATOR'

Story by J03 Laura C. Wiggins and Photo by PH3 Timothy Comerford

It cost the government more than \$1.2 billion to build USS BONHOMME RICHARD (LHD 6). Since then, changes and additions have added to the overall cost of the ship. Among the people entrusted to drive this expensive vessel is Seaman Libby Walker.

Libby Annette Walker was born September 21, 1981 in the town of Coos Bay, Oregon. While only seventeen years old, she enrolled in the Delayed Entry Program for the United States Navy. Now, at age 18, she is the youngest helmsman onboard.

"I joined [the Navy] because I grew up in a small town and I wanted to meet new people," said Walker.

Walker comes from a military family. Her father, Les Walker, was a Radioman in the Army during Vietnam. Her eldest brother Aaron spent six years in the Navy as an Information Specialist. Leslie, the second eldest brother enlisted in the Navy one year before her and is a Hospital Corpsman.

Being a helmsman is a big responsibility. The helmsman is the watch stander that drives the ship through the water, and his or her ability to stay on course and maneuver around obstacles can be the difference between life and death. When asked how she felt her first time on the helm, Walker smiled.

"I was nervous. I didn't want

anyone talking to me or distracting me. I take it very seriously," she said.

Walker's advice for newcomers who want to be helmsmen: "The most important thing is to learn to anticipate the roll of the ship and to relax. It takes time and practice, like learning to ride a bike."

Of course, a bicycle doesn't cost quite as much. The fact that the ship costs more than \$1 billion can't affect Walker's driving. As soon as she is helmsman qualified, she will begin training as master helmsman, the person who drives the ship in and out of ports and in restrictive waters.



Seaman Libby Walker

MCCAIN MORE OF A THREAT THAN BUSH SUPPORTERS THOUGHT

By Richard Perez-Pena

Sen. John McCain of Arizona, armed with a modest amount of money and no organization to speak of, remains the underdog against Gov. George W. Bush of Texas, who has plenty of both.

On March 7, McCain's limited resources will be stretched thin by having to compete in Republican contests in 16 states, including New York and California. Yet many supporters of Bush are worried.

Some prominent Republican elected and party officials are concerned that they jumped on the Bush band-wagon too soon, failing to anticipate McCain's challenge and Bush's weaknesses, though all insist they have no plans to change allegiances.

"I know there is some of that going on, but I think it's ill-advised," said Joseph Mondello, the Nassau County Republican Party chairman, who is running to be a Bush delegate. "I still think Bush is going to win."

NASDAQ REACHES RECORD HIGH

By Associated Press

The NASDAQ composite index soared to a record Thursday while blue-chip stocks lagged, pulled down by persistent worries that their earnings were not growing fast enough to offset rising interest rates.

The NASDAQ rose 122.39 points, to 4,485.63, topping Tuesday's record. The Dow Jones industrial average fell 55.53 points, to 10,643.63, while the Standard & Poor's 500-stock index increased 5.13 points, to 1,416.83.

The technology shares that dominated NASDAQ rose as investors figured their earnings growth puts them in position to thrive even if interest rates rise later this year.

*** SUNDAY SITE TV SCHEDULE ***

CHANNEL 2

0900 SPICE WORLD
1030 NAKED GUN 2: SMELL OF FEAR
1200 FIELD OF DREAMS
1340 BAPS
1510 CRIMSON LIGHTS
1640 PATCH ADAMS
1800 MOD SQUAD
1900 SHINE
2045 SPECIES 2
2215 MESSAGE IN A BOTTLE

CHANNEL 6

0900 THE PERFECT WEAPON
1030 SOLDIER
1200 RISKY BUSINESS
1340 THE POSTMAN
1630 PUSHING TIN
1830 8 HEADS IN A DUFFEL BAG
1900 A SIMPLE PLAN
2100 KNOCKING ON DEATH'S DOOR
2230 PLAYING BY HEART

BONHOMME RICHARD'S ALMANAC

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NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL NEWS

PRESIDENT CLINTON GIVEN 30 DAYS TO RESPOND TO COMPLAINTS

By Associated Press

The Arkansas Supreme Court has given President Clinton 30 days to respond to two ethics complaints seeking to pull his license to practice law because of his conduct in the Lewinsky scandal.

One complaint specifically cites U.S. District Judge Susan Webber Wright's ruling that Clinton gave intentionally false testimony about his sexual relationship with Lewinsky in the Paula Jones civil lawsuit. The court's decision resurrects a controversy that Clinton hoped was put behind him at his impeachment trial last year. Now, his lawyers will have to defend his license at the same time he is trying to close out his presidency on a positive note.

SPACE SHUTTLE COMMANDER KREGEL READY TO GET IN THE SADDLE AGAIN

By Associated Press

Space Shuttle Commander Kevin Kregel says he's ready to "get back in the saddle" and ride "Endeavour" into space today.

Endeavour is set to blast off at 12:30 p.m., Eastern time, on an eleven-day earth-mapping mission.

The flight was scheduled for last fall, but was put on hold because of a wiring problem. And last week's liftoff was scrubbed due to rainy weather and a faulty computer control unit. Technicians have replaced that unit and forecasters say the weather odds are excellent for launch today.

The radar mission is designed to create super-detailed 3-D maps of the earth's surface.

RAPPER SEAN "PUFFY" COMBS ACCUSED OF STARTING FIGHT

By New York Times

A prosecutor accused rap impresario Sean "Puffy" Combs Thursday of sparking a December shooting at a Times Square night-club. The prosecutor, Matthew Bogdanos, accused Combs, 31, of lying in his testimony to a grand jury and trying to bribe witnesses. Combs caused the shooting, the prosecutor said, by arguing with a man over which one of them made more money. He said the argument escalated until the man threw a wad of cash in Combs' face, leading to an exchange of gunfire that wounded three bystanders.

22 ARRESTED FOR HIJACKING JET

By Associated Press

British police have now arrested 22 people in connection with the hijacking that brought a Boeing 727 from Afghanistan to London.

Authorities suspect that those who staged the four-day drama may have been motivated by a desire to escape their homeland. Seventy-four of the 151 people who got off the plane are seeking asylum. But Britain's top law enforcement official says the asylum-seekers shouldn't get too comfortable. He says he'll personally review their cases and, if the law allows, send them back.

The Chief Constable says during the final hours of the talks, the hijackers expressed concern about the political situation in Afghanistan.

Afghanistan is ruled by the conservative Muslim militia known as the Taliban.

SPORTS

MARINO BUYS OUT CONTRACT, BILLS CUT PRO BOWL PLAYERS

By Charlie Nobles

Dan Marino, the National Football League's leading career passer, voided the final two years of his contract. The Buffalo Bills Thursday broke their last ties with their American Football Conference championship teams of the 1990s.

Buffalo cut defensive end Bruce Smith, running back Thurman Thomas and wide receiver Andre Reed, all Pro Bowl players. The Bills, feeling pressured by the salary cap, needed to trim more than \$10 million by Thursday.

With Marino, the situation is not clear. Dave Wannstedt, the new Dolphins head coach, has said privately that it would be best if the 17-year veteran retires, but nobody has been overtly influencing Marino to end his career.

LOVE TAKES LEAD AT BUICK

By New York Times

While Tiger Woods struggled with his swing Thursday, Davis Love III gained confidence in his.

Love shot a seven-under-par 65 to lead the first round of the Buick Invitational by one stroke over Phil Mickelson and by two strokes over J.P. Hayes, J.L. Lewis and Scott Verplank, who were tied at 67.

Woods was six strokes off the lead after his opening-round 71, starting slowly in his bid to win his seventh consecutive PGA Tour start.

NBA SCORES:

PHOENIX 101 MINNESOTA 85
SACRAMENTO 96 DENVER 84
VANCOUVER 112 L A CLIPPERS 90

CINCINNATI REDS GET DOUBLE BARGAIN IN GRIFFEY DEAL

By Murray Chass

General manager, Jim Bowden, executed his strategy perfectly and the Reds acquired Ken Griffey Jr. from the Seattle Mariners for a bargain package of players.

Griffey, who wanted to play in Cincinnati, his hometown, agreed to a nine-year contract worth \$116.5 million, an average of \$12,944,444 a year, which falls \$2 million short of the game's highest annual average salary. Last year, he rejected a Seattle offer of \$148 million for eight years.

Bowden gave up two months ago in his pursuit of the player he says is his favorite in the game. He sent the Mariners Brett Tomko, Mike Cameron, Antonio Perez and Jake Meyer.

"This is something I dreamed about as a little kid," Griffey said at a news conference in Cincinnati, "being back in my hometown where I watched so many great players."

NHL SCORES:

DETROIT 2 ST. LOUIS 0
WASHINGTON 1 MONTREAL 0
EDMONTON 3 PHILADELPHIA 2
NY ISLANDERS 5 TAMPA BAY 4
BUFFALO 2 NASHVILLE 1
COLORADO 3 CALGARY 2

TOP 25 SCORES:

(2) STANFORD 76 (24) OREGON 61
LOUISVILLE 82 (4) SYRACUSE 69
(7) ARIZONA 65 WASHINGTON 56
(19) TEMPLE 75 FORDHAM 61
(21) UTAH 83 SAN DIEGO STATE 65

NO PARTY, NO PRESENTS, NO BIRTHDAY!

Story by J01(SW) Robert W. Garnand

Sometimes when a Sailor doesn't want to follow through on a particular task you might hear them say, "What are they going to do? Take my birthday away?"

That's sort of what happened to three USS BONHOMME RICHARD (LHD 6) Sailors last Monday, Feb. 7 at midnight.

In this case, however, it wasn't because these Sailors didn't feel like following through on a particular task. It was simply because the ship crossed the International Date Line, completely skipping Tuesday and going into Wednesday.

In other words, the ship had no Feb. 8, 2000. No one onboard whose birthday was on Feb. 8 had a birthday!

One of those Sailors is Operations Specialist First Class Curtis White from Brooklyn, N.Y., who turned 40.

When asked if it bothered him that he missed his birthday he said, "Yes, it does feel sort of strange not having a birthday, but it's the second time the Navy has done this to me!"

Fire Controlman Third Class Keyatta Abram from Detroit, Mich., who turned 23, said, "It really doesn't bother me all that much that I'm missing my birthday because we are underway."

Yeoman Third Class Kuyanda Nathan from Moss Point, Miss., who turned 22, said, "It bothers me very much, but I understand that they couldn't pick another day to cross the date line."

As to whether these Sailors are going to get any cards, presents or e-mail, they say they hope so and are still waiting on mail.

"A lot of my friends send me greetings cards on e-mail, but I couldn't go to the websites to open them," said White. "I don't have access."

"I'm not quite sure if I'm getting any presents or cards from anyone in the mail," Abram said. "I did get a card and a Happy Birthday wish from a



Pictured from left are OS1(SW/AW) Curtis White, FC3 Keyatta Abram and YN3 Kuyanda Nathan. (Photo by Ph3 Timothy Comerford).

person on the ship."

"I am waiting on mail," said Nathan. "Hopefully I get something."

When the ship makes its next port call, all three Sailors said they definitely plan on taking time to have their own birthday celebration.

White said, "Oh yes indeed, I plan on having a birthday celebration."

Abram said she plans on doing something but, "the bad part is, I have duty on the second day we enter our next port."

As for Nathan, one birthday party won't be enough. "I plan on celebrating every liberty day in port!"

For having missed their birthdays, these Sailors seem to be taking it in stride. Just remember these Sailors, though, the next time you ask, "What are they going to do? Take my birthday away?"

Oh! Happy Birthday to all those we missed in this story.

WEAPONS CO. MARINES SPRING 'TRAP'

Staff Sgt. Glenn Holloway, PA Chief 15th MEU (SOC)

SCHOFIELD BARRACKS TRAINING AREA, Hawaii – The Marines of 81mm Platoon, Weapons Company, Battalion Landing Team 1/4 completed their live fire and maneuver Tactical Recovery of Aircraft and Personnel training here February 1-2.

As part of the sustainment training conducted by the 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit (Special Operations Capable), the platoon moved into the Army's KR-5 Range, secured the landing zone and moved toward a simulated downed pilot in the training village.

The training provided the mortarmen with a chance to practice the necessary skills for their Special Operations Capabilities role

of TRAP platoon, said 1stLt. Corey M. Collier, platoon commander.

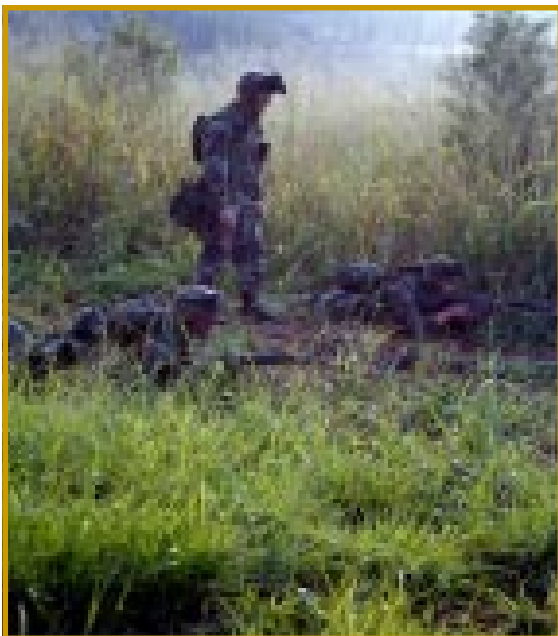
The platoon has completed the training at Camp Pendleton many times with blank rounds, but this evolution gave them their first chance to move and think as a team while assaulting objectives with live ammunition in an unfamiliar environment, said Collier.

"The biggest thing is the environment and the fact that we haven't been here before and don't know what's going to come at us," said Lance Cpl. Marc Martinez, 3rd team, 25, Salinas, Calif. "We don't know if the targets (in the building) will be enemy or civilian. We'll just have to keep a clear head and maintain muzzle awareness."

The targets in the mock village were a combination of the mechanized "Ivan" targets and a new target for the Marines, the Tomi target.

The Tomi is a lightweight mannequin-style target with a hole in the chest. The hole allows a balloon to be placed in the chest cavity. A rope is run through the target's head into the chest cavity and tied to the balloon. The other end of the rope is secured to the ceiling. When the balloon is shot the rope slides out and the target falls to the ground.

The Tomi comes in male, female and child sizes; all three types were placed in the buildings of the village. The Marines had to move into the buildings, assess the inhabit-



1st Lt. Corey Collier, platoon commander 81mm Platoon, Weapons Company, Battalion Landing Team 1/4, directs his Marines while they engage targets during live fire and maneuver training Feb. 1 at Schofield Barracks, Hawaii. Photo by Staff Sgt. Glenn Holloway.

SPRING TRAP continued from Page 6

ants, and make a decision to fire or hold off.

Following a walk-through with the range safety officer, covering all aspects of the training, the team leaders went back to their Marines and regurgitated the information. They embellished where necessary and asked questions of their team members to ensure orders were clear. With 2,500 rounds of live ammunition going down range, there was no room for miscommunication.

"This helps my Marines come together more as a team, because it's been a little bit since we've done training like this," said Sgt. David Eggert, 3rd team leader, 22, Sedona,

Ariz. "It lets us use all our (Standard Operating Procedures) and training we've completed over the last year and prepares us for if we have to do this for real."

The platoon assaulted the course three times during their first day there and three more that night, before getting up the next day and going through it again.

"This training gives the MEU a dedicated platoon that's there in case anything goes wrong anywhere in theater," Collier said. "So if an aircraft goes down or (a unit) or a sensitive piece of equipment needs to be recovered, we can go do it and accomplish the mission."



Marines from 81mm Platoon, Weapons Company, Battalion Landing Team 1/4, move through a building searching for potential targets during a live fire and maneuver TRAP training Feb. 1-2 at Schofield Barracks, Hawaii. The training was conducted by the 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit (Special Operations Capable) as part of its sustainment training. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Glenn Holloway).